

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S
NEW YEAR POEM

This Spring will by far outshine all the past springs.
The tidings of battles won will spread elation throughout the land.
South and North will vie in fighting U.S. foe
Forward!

Our total triumph is an assurance double surety

VIETNAM
COURIER

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From Jan. 29 to Feb. 26, 1968

HEROIC SOUTH VIET NAM WON TREMENDOUS, ALL-SIDED VICTORIES CHANGING WHOLE ASPECT OF WAR

- * Nearly All Parts of Countryside and Many Urban Areas Placed Under People's Control; 1,200,000 More People Freed; Revolutionary Rear Base Considerably Expanded.
- * More Than 290,000 Enemy Troops Put out of Action or Disbanded (Including 20,000 U.S. and Satellite Troops and 70,000 Puppet Soldiers Killed, Wounded or Captured).
- * Important Portion of Enemy Military Potential Destroyed.
- * Shattering Blows Dealt at Puppet Army and Administration.
- * Enemy "Pacification Programme" Reduced to Nothing.

(THIRD SPECIAL COMMUNIQUE OF P.L.A.F. COMMAND)



P.L.A.F. night assault

U.S. GOVERNMENT MUST BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTINUATION OF WAR

FOLLOWING the statements of Jan. 28, 1967 and Dec. 29, 1967, the statement of Feb. 8, 1968 of D.R.V.N. Foreign Minister Nguyen Day Trinh to the AFP correspondent clearly indicated the way to talks between the D.R.V.N. and the United States. It once again made clear the just position and serious attitude of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and once again was given a warm reception by broad sections of world public opinion.

Everything has been made plain: Does the U.S. want talks with the D.R.V.N.? The D.R.V.N. is an independent and sovereign state which has fallen a victim to U.S.

(Continued page 4)

Welcome Spring 1968!

TO HUU

ALL-PEOPLE'S

Brothers and sisters!
Raise high your guns, hail Spring 1968!
Hail the epic Spring!
Spring of brave hearts.

Who comes there, brimming with Spring?
Hurrah, Liberation fighter!
Salute to you, the flower of fine men!

History hugs you, bare-footed lad
Who lives fearless, dauntless, on earth,
Thick Sangh (t) of the 20th century,
Falling in the U.S. aggressors even with a bow or a sharp bamboo spear.

Not looking at yourself, you will never know,
O valiant fighter,
In the five continents, truth is watching
Your marching soldiers... and your hat
That looks like a water tent!

O soft canvas hat, as lovable as a little hand,
That does not even hurt a leaf on its tough,
That shines on the fighter's head like a patch of blue sky,
That rumpages here and there, right and left, irresistible,
Stronger than all the bombs and bullets, frightening even
the Pentagon!

May I ask: has the Truong Son (2)
Any peak higher
Than that of revolutionary heroism?
Maybe: to you, Poet, it has been brought its light,
It can't yet send us a soul,
But has given us a soul and a heart
That know what is right, how to love, and how to hate,
How to forge ahead, and win battles!

- (1) A legendary peasant hero of Viet Nam who killed a monster eagle and saved the royal prince.
- (2) The Long Keng running along most of Viet Nam's length.
- (3) Quoted from President Ho Chi Minh's New Year's message, 1968.
- (4) and (5) Tran Hung Dao, Le Loi, and Nguyen Huu, three of the greatest national heroes of Viet Nam.

What a joy today! This Spring morning
Off we go, our hearts flying, on the wings
Of each cloud, of each puff of wind,
The North wind that is blowing South!
O winds and clouds, don't wait for the Spring sun's return,
Fly and cover the truck convoys
And the troops streaming towards the frontline...

Our Fatherland! Twenty-three years of hardships and sufferings, of enduring fighting.
Forward!
Our total triumph is an assurance double sure! (3)
O people at home and all over the world and far-off battlefields,

Listen... The two years are meeting,
Uncle Ho is hailing, Spring is coming...

Hurrah heroic Spring of 1968!
Let all our cannons thunder!

And you, fearless fighters, forward!
With the magnificent motto of the Truans, Le (4), with
the awesome impetus of Quang Truong (5)
Everywhere, in the towns and in the countryside,
Crush the Yanks and the infidels!

For Independence and Freedom, for our majestic mountains and tumultuous streams,
For the sacred values of Man,
For the flowers and leaves to remain for ever fresh and green,
We shall win—And wrest the most beautiful Spring!

Translated by Tran Van Chuong

U.S. GOVERNMENT...

(Continued from page 1)

aggression and been subjected to blatant U.S. bombing and strafing. If talks are to be held at all, first of all the U.S. must stop unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N. The talks will begin as soon as this unconditional stop has been proved and both sides will discuss other issues.

In a statement on Feb. 24 on the American television, U.N. Secretary General U. Thant also expressed the conviction that the unconditional cessation of the bombing and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N. will lead to meaningful talks. On Feb. 26, Swedish Foreign Minister Torbjorn Nilsson declared his agreement with U. Thant's view that the talks will take place after the U.S. has ended the bombing of North Viet Nam unconditionally. On Feb. 27, the Government of Finland also issued a statement pointing out that the cessation of the bombing of North Viet Nam is a pre-condition for the

talks to begin. On Feb. 28, the French Government expressed the view that the unconditional cessation of the bombing of North Viet Nam is necessary and sufficient to lead to talks with the D.R.V.N. and the United States.

In disregard of world public opinion which has condemned it and drawing no lesson from its disastrous setback on the South Viet Nam battlefield over recent days, the Johnson administration, however, still shows obduracy. On Feb. 21, at a meeting with U. Thant's U.S. President Johnson reiterated that the "San Antonio formula" was a valid formula for the settlement of the Viet Nam problem. On Feb. 25, William Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, declared that the U.S. Government continued to stick to the "San Antonio formula."

This "formula" essentially places the aggressor and the victim of aggression on an equal footing, and the right way to follow and demanded that the Johnson administration stop bombing North Viet Nam so as to get talks started.

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On Feb. 26, 1968 the Command of the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Front issued a third special communiqué on the victories scored by the people's revolutionary armed forces in South Viet Nam since Jan. 29, 1968. The communiqué reads:

SINCE the night of Jan. 29, 1968 the People's Liberation Armed Forces together with the entire people of South Viet Nam have been continually stepping up their earth-shaking offensive and uprisings hitherto unknown.

In less than 30 days and nights our armed forces and people have launched most daring attacks against the enemy and staged uprisings in all towns, cities and provincial capitals. In South Viet Nam, striking accurately at almost all key positions of the enemy, big and small, from the central to local level and from Saigon and Hue cities to the provinces, seized control of many places and inflicted heavy losses on the U.S. puppet and satellite troops as well as the puppet administration. In many places, we have attacked the enemy and completely and completely beaten off their counter-attacks.

We have recorded very great and all-sided victories. We have wiped out a major part of the enemy's effectiveness. According to first statistics, we have killed, wounded or taken prisoner more than 90,000 enemy soldiers including over 20,000 U.S. and satellite troops. Whole areas have been wiped out. The number of enemy battalions entirely wiped out equals the average of a nine-month period of 1967, the year of biggest victories compared with any previous year. In face of the general offensive of our armed forces and people, the puppet army has disintegrated by big chunks. In the early days of Feb. 1968, the number of puppet troops disbanded ran into tens of thousands. This downhill process is accelerating at an alarming rate and the enemy has no hope to stop it. Most of the puppet military, regional forces and police have been disbanded.

This is an extremely great achievement. In only four weeks we put out of action as many enemy troops as in a three-month period of 1967. The number of enemy battalions entirely wiped out equals the average of a nine-month period of 1967, the year of biggest victories compared with any previous year. In face of the general offensive of our armed forces and people, the puppet army has disintegrated by big chunks. In the early days of Feb. 1968, the number of puppet troops disbanded ran into tens of thousands. This downhill process is accelerating at an alarming rate and the enemy has no hope to stop it. Most of the puppet military, regional forces and police have been disbanded.

We have destroyed a substantial amount of the enemy war means. According to statistics available, we have shot down or destroyed on the ground more than 1,800 tanks, 1,000 armored cars and thousands of other military vehicles, trucks or damaged war materiel and combat launches, and destroyed millions of tons of bombs, ammunition and food of the enemy. This is also an extremely big achievement of our armed forces and people.

The enemy's losses in four weeks equal three-fifths of the total losses in 1967: in aircraft, one-third in armored cars, and two-fifths in tanks and boats. This is a very heavy adverse setback. Their fire power and mobility have been seriously impaired. Their battalions in many places are running short of ammunition, food and fuel, and are meeting with enormous difficulties in their movement as well as rescue operations. The U.S. First Air Mobile

Cavalry Division has been left with only half of its normal aircraft strength. What the enemy regard as their strongest points and actually constitutes the main props of their troops has thus been badly hit. As a consequence, the morale of U.S. puppet and satellite troops has dropped to a new low.

We have dealt shattering blows at the puppet administrative system and expanded the people's control.

The puppet regime of the Thieu-Kieu clique of traitors at the central level has come under heavy attacks and is being paralyzed and disarrayed. The puppet administration at the provincial and district levels is also in a moribund state. Their machine of repression and reactionary organizations in almost all the villages and hamlets have been in the main wiped out. We have destroyed, captured or forced the enemy to withdraw from more than 700 posts and watch-towers. We have completely smashed the "rural pacification" plan which was so vital to the enemy. 1,200,000 more of our people have been liberated from their grip.

Our people have won the control of most part of the vast rural area and many urban areas, and are speedily setting up revolutionary power at the village level. Thus the Thieu-Kieu People's Revolutionary Committee has come into being to assume the tasks of a provincial and municipal people's administrative organ. This is another extremely great success of ours. Our rear, a permanent factor of our victory, and our resistance bases have been considerably expanded and fresh, new resistance bases have been established. The Western High Plateau leads to the vast plains of Quang Tri and Thua Thien, and the Central Truong Bo (Central Viet Nam) from the mountain regions of Eastern Nam Bo down to the Plain of Reeds and the immense Mekong Delta. Our military and political bases have increased quickly and steadily.

The puppet administration, one of the main props of U.S. neo-colonialism, is now merely a decaying tree on the point of being felled down by the revolutionary army of our armed forces and people. The rear of the enemy which is their base and source of manpower and material has been narrowed down to an extent hitherto unknown.

In short, we have won successes of very important strategic significance both militarily and politically. The U.S.-puppet clique are suffering very heavy losses which can be hardly remedied. They have diametrically failed in the strategic objectives which they had been long trying to achieve such as "search and destroy" the South Viet Nam People's Armed Forces, "pacify" the countryside, build up the puppet administration, consolidate the puppet army. From now on, their situation having become many times more difficult, they will have still a slender chance to realize their aims. To divert public attention from their defeat and intimidate the Vietnamese people, the U.S.-puppets have used bombs and shells, toxic gas and noxious chemicals against our people and burned down many dwelling houses, thus rendering tens of thousands of people homeless. Just while they are massing their people and reducing their houses to ashes, the cruel and cowardly pirates call for "relief" for those who have been relatives are the very victims of their criminal actions!

They want to put the blame on our people. Like pouring oil on the fire, they only embitter our people's hatred which will come down like thunderbolts upon their heads. They will certainly have to repay ten times for their crimes. Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom, nothing more shake our people's determination to fight until victory, to die rather than surrender.

The glorious victories of our armed forces and people have given rise to a new situation on the battlefield which is particularly favourable to us and unfavourable to the enemy.

Never before have the enemy forces been so weakened as now, in terms of organization, morale, effectiveness as well as material build-up. The puppet, U.S. and satellite troops have all been debilitated.

In addition to the units totally wiped out, all the remaining American

units are now understrength. Many U.S. Marine battalions have lost half of their manpower. The 13rd Paratroop Brigade has lost two-thirds of its effectiveness. The 1st and 25th Divisions, the 1st Air Mobile Cavalry Division and the American Division have suffered heavy losses.

All the puppet units are alarmingly understrength. At least more than 30 per cent of the main force puppet battalions have either been wiped out or heavily decimated, among them of the 15 general reserve battalions. Four paratroop battalions — the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th — are left with only about 200 men each. Some divisions such as the 1st, 5th and 7th have been badly mauled. Some regiments and dozens of battalions have lost their combat strength.

At present, the puppets are hastily drafting youths into the army and throwing them into battle. This obviously cannot increase the fighting power of the puppet troops but will only render them more disparate. The U.S. is dispatching one more brigade and one more regiment to South Viet Nam but how can they hope to estimate the damage with a few cups of water?

Never has our force been so powerful as now, both in the frontline and in the rear. Our units are both in number and in quality.

Never has the enemy's field army been so weakened and so bold as now. Their losing position, passiveness and weakening, is in the ever most critical and dangerous bitter struggle during two "dry-season" counter-offensives and in the process of the enemy's "two-prong" plan in 1967, since the beginning of this year the U.S. aggressors were gradually switching to the defensive on all battlefronts and were forced to carry on their vicious "two-prong" scheme.

But the offensive and simultaneous uprisings of our armed forces and people have completely upset their strategic plans and schemes went bankrupt even in attacks in areas much more important for them, that is the towns and cities and a number of important communication axes. The war has flared up in the very last dens of the enemy. Their battleground which has already been narrowed down is split up, encircled and attacked from all sides.

Never has our winning position, initiative and offensive been promoted to as high a degree and so steady as now. Our frontline is encircling the enemy's key positions so far regarded by them as the most secure. We have mounted attacks deep into their rear in the towns and cities including Saigon and Hue, and cast a wide net around the enemy in the towns and cities. Behind our front lines is a firm gear axis which embraces the vast rural, jungle and mountain areas controlled by the people. The enemy's source of insupportable strength for us to win victory.

Never has the enemy experienced so severe a political decline and decay as now. The "constitutional government" of the clique of traitors is controlling nobody and is like a flickering light in a hurricane. The so-called "Anti-Communist People's National Salvation Front" recently created by the U.S. imperialists in the part of Saigon city still

under their temporary control cannot fool anybody nor conceal the isolation of the traitors who were notorious henchmen of the French colonialists and Japanese imperialists, and the revealing U.S. imperialism. Whatever camouflage it may be given, this organization remains an anti-popular anti-social creature. The genuine patriots take no notice of it and hold it in utter contempt. It is also a political trick connected with the U.S. imperialists' policy to change horses midstream.

No better than the clique of traitors, the U.S. aggressors have become more and more isolated in fact and in opinion at home and in the world. The sharp contradictions within the ranks of the U.S. aggressors and the traitors and the serious conflicts between the U.S. aggressors and the puppets and the satellites have become more and more critical. The aggressive will of the U.S. aggressors is weakening.

Never before has the unrivalled political and moral superiority of our armed forces and people reached such a high level as now. Our power is so powerful, our material force so new.

Our armed forces and people, united millions like one man, as driving forces, have won victory after victory with confidence and a greater resolve than ever to rise up and overthrow the enemy.

Millions of people are courageously taking to the streets to directly confront the enemy, and formed combat units equipped with arms and munitions. The political confidence of our people has become a mighty force more experienced than ever.

The radiant prestige of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, the organizer and promoter of all victories of the South Vietnamese people, is on the rise.

The workers, peasants and other labouring people are playing the role of shock units in the front-offensive and uprisings of our people.

Progressive personalities, intellectuals, students, pupils, youth, women, business men and people of other walks of life are actively contributing to the cause of national independence.

The Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace in Saigon, the Front of Alliance for National Independence, Democracy and Peace in Hue, and many other patriotic organizations have come into being and are, side by side with the entire people to step up the struggle for national independence.

Our forces in North Viet Nam are assisting us with might and main and are constantly encouraging the strength of the U.S. forces and people through U.S. Viet Nam.

Our people's resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, for the war and the greatest sympathy and support from the socialist camp and the entire progressive mass movement including the progressive American people.

We are being provided with the most favourable conditions and the finest bases to carry out our struggle.

Our position and strength is growing like a radiant rising sun.

The enemy position and strength is flickering like a dying flame.

We shall certainly win complete victory.

The enemy are doomed to complete failure.

THE NAMESE WOMEN IN THE FACE OF AMERICAN AGGRESSION

ON December 6, 1967 in Quang Binh, a 19-year-old girl, Nguyen Thi Xuan, shot down an American Phantom jet with 20 rifle bullets. It was a lucky hit, but not an exceptional one. To date, there have been brought down over the D.R.V.N. by eleven units of militiamen.

"When the enemy comes, even the women will take to arms," runs an age-old popular saying. As early as the year 30, the two Trưng Sisters raised the banner of resistance to foreign aggression. Ever since the history of Viet Nam abounds in exploits achieved by her women in defence of the motherland. At present, when American aircraft—and American airships in the case of coastal provinces—have brought war to the women's hamlets, there is no longer any "rear" area. Housewives and even old folks find themselves in the frontline. And so, in the D.R.V.N., the women have joined in the fight by the hundred of thousands. Those who are unarmed have engaged in anti-air or order-keeping work; they help artillery, missile, engineers' units build combat positions, carry ammunition, learn to handle A.A. guns so as to replace gunners wounded or killed in action. The percentage of women membership in the people's militia units rose from 29.5 per cent in 1965 to 34.85 per cent in 1966, and even to 40 per cent in certain regions. Women are also present on the communication front, repairing and building roads, bridges, railway tracks, canals, dykes, which are being ceaselessly pounded by American aircraft.

Women also participate in the national struggle through their daily labour, and the role played by them in economic and cultural build-up grows ever more important, especially since the start of American aggression. The question is not to assume production tasks, but also to bring about rapid economic progress, and replace men at technical and leading posts at all levels. Circumstances have placed on North Vietnamese women's shoulders new responsibilities and forced them to progress in all fields.

In the countryside, 65 per cent of the labour force is made up of women, who take on major responsibilities. At present, there are over 4,000 women

presidents or vice-presidents of agricultural co-operatives, and 84,000 others hold responsible posts in various branches of activity. The percentage of women in factory and State service personnel increased from 28.5 per cent in 1965 to 32.5 per cent in 1967. Forty-nine per cent of the college graduates are women. More than 3,000 women are college graduates and 12,000 others have finished secondary vocational school.

Women's participation in administrative and political functions has greatly increased



since American aggression. In 1967, women made up 47.42 per cent and 45.79 per cent respectively of the number of people elected to the People's Councils. Each village or district administrative committee now has at least a woman president, vice-president or standing member.

The promotion of women is a policy advocated and practised by the Communist Party of Viet Nam. The Viet Nam Workers' Party—ever since its founding in 1930. It has been growing at the same rate as the political and social struggle, the first resistance war—against French colonialism—and, the upsurge of socialism, have made a big step forward since the start of American aggression. In 1967, a campaign was launched to promote women to responsible posts, to do

away with prejudices—in women's, as well as men's minds—which hinder feminine advance, and provide material help to women with a view to helping them achieve quick progress in all fields. The Viet Nam Women's Union called on the women to tackle these tasks:

- Production work;
- Household duties; and
- Combat tasks.

In co-operation with the educational services, the Viet Nam Women's Union has opened nearly 3,000 special complementary education classes for women to enable them to assume their new responsibilities. Creches and infant classes have multiplied. In Hai Duong province for instance, 28 per cent of the children are looked after in creches, which exist in 80 per cent of the agricultural co-operatives. In 1966, the number of children attending infant classes increased by

By that time a group of Liberation fighters had arrived at the villa which stood in the downtown Lu Thuong Kiet Street, and started searching it thoroughly. But not a single American could be seen anywhere.

An old woman appeared on the scene. Grasping the men's hands, she said, half-laughing, half-weeping: "O sons, how well you fought! They were brought away to her house. Now let's take a good look. They must be somewhere in this building."

"Ah, what did I tell you," she screamed, pointing at a

Brave Mother of Hue

AROUSED from sleep by the firing, the American "advisor" jumped out of bed then slipped off guard room for cover, without even caring to put on his sleepers.

It never occurred to her that the Yank would disgrace himself by taking cover in such a place. She seized the door's knob and gave a pull.

"He must be in here, lad," she called out suddenly, finding that the door was bolted from inside.

"Get out," she ordered. "Get out or I'll bash your head in."

A trembling voice could be heard from behind the door: "Spare me, please... Spare me, please..."

The Liberation fighters rushed forward and, together with the old mother, dragged the Yank by his neck with fear, out of his hiding.

"Spare me, please... Spare me, please..." The Yank kept repeating in Vietnamese, sniffing aloud all the time.

car. "They haven't gone yet."

"Who is the owner of that car?" queried one fighter.

"That man himself," the mother answered.

"And who is that man?"

"Well, you know, the American colonel, the 'advisor' of the puppets in this area."

"What's the owner of that car?" queried one fighter.

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"And who is that man?"

IN an attempt to slow down the collapse of the Saigon administration touched off by the stormy onslaught of the South Vietnamese forces and people, Bunker and the Thieu-Ky clique have painstakingly created what is called "Anti-Communist Salvation Front for National Salvation."

Their intention is to use this organization for rallying the revolutionary forces in Saigon to deal with the unprecedented growth and development of the South Vietnamese people's united front against U.S. aggression, and at the same time check the far-reaching impact of the Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace, which emerged in the revolutionary tide sweeping South Viet Nam's towns and cities.

Their public list including the names of intellectuals belonging to different opposition parties and presented them as members of the "Front" with the hope of using it to curb the moribund Saigon regime.

But the list proved a trumped-up one. According to

knowledgeable sources in Saigon, many of those listed have refused to adhere to the afore-said organization. Candidates to last year's "presidential elections" even strongly objected. Many observers in Saigon predict that the move will miscarry in the forthcoming days.

Amidst the disturbances now besetting the puppet administration and with military and political dirty tricks on the part of the opposition, the Thieu-Ky junta has created many of its leaders, of whom those of the hostile Buddhist sect, the students' movement and the legal trade unions.

Western news reports say that, with Ky's resignation from the presidency of the "National Rehabilitation Council," the rift between Thieu and Ky keeps widening.

The above situation illustrates the utter isolation and the unending, ever-increasing crisis which plagues the Saigon quelling administration.

News from SAIGON

DRY-SEASON FIRST-THREE-MONTH BALANCE-SHEET

AT the beginning of this dry season, the Lao people and army have won big victories in all battlefields, *Patet Lao Press* agency announced.

During the first three months of the dry season (from November 1967 to the end of January 1968) the Lao people and army put out of

60 radio sets and a great quantity of military equipment. They also destroyed thousands of firearms, hundreds of tons of ammunition, shot down or destroyed 40 aircraft, sank 9 motor boats, destroyed 27 military vehicles, blew up 4 bridges, set 4 petrol dumps, 4 ammunition storages and many other war

A dozen enemy posts and military positions illegally set up in the liberated zone were razed to the ground. Tens of thousands of people herded into camouflage concentration camps and entire villages were liberated. The people's power was restored in 7 villages and 35 hamlets.

The fact that the revolution-ary forces were able to mount repeated attacks on Tan Son Nhut airbase—separated from downtown Saigon by about ten kilometers—only shows that the people's power was on the increase.

They captured 1,841 firearms of various kinds, hundreds of tons of munitions,

FOREIGN OPINION

Utterly Inept Saigon Administration Has in Fact Collapsed

The recent successful P.L.A.F. attacks and popular uprisings in various towns and cities of South Viet Nam are of paramount strategic significance. In addition to military and political gains the patriots have fundamentally shattered the puppet army and administration, the prop of neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. This is an open secret revealed by the Western press as testified by the following excerpts:

"No measures taken by the Saigon government to deal with integration and the American are witnessing the foundering of the pretext for their presence in South Viet Nam: a so-called 'representative government' has just been toppled, and their military support in South Viet Nam is an army of traitors and mercenaries whose morale and loyalty have ever since been very low."

El Moudjahid (Feb. 19, 1968)

"Undiscoverable in the first 24 hours of the Viet Cong offensive and brought back to Saigon, the insistence of the Americans, the President of South Viet Nam, General Thieu, and other members of his government, has given a proof of his ineffectuality. The army has military and civilian officials who smashed the machinery, and the puppet regime has been a poor show. Washington ruling circles affirmed that the puppet Government had under its control and protection three-quarters of South Viet Nam's population. The Viet Cong offensive has brutally debunked the myth."

France-Sol (Feb. 8, 1968)

"The Saigon government has utterly failed to earn the confidence of the people. The South Vietnamese army has ceased to fight."

Stephan Young (UPI, Feb. 27, 1968)

"The Saigon political structure is no stronger today than it was three years ago in the sense of being able on its own to govern, to defend or to rally the people of South Viet Nam."

Mike Mandel (Reuters, Feb. 12, 1968)

Washington had thought that the massive presence of a U.S. expeditionary corps would help consolidate the puppet regime. The contrary has happened. The extreme savagery of the Americans' conduct of the war, the destruction of innumerable villages over the years, the use of napalm, phosphorus, toxic chemicals, poison gases, have fanned up the hatred of the Americans in all sections of the population, including puppet soldiers and officials.

The present of 500,000 G.I.s in Viet Nam is a constant reminder of the depravity of public morals and inflation seriously affects

the family budgets of puppet soldiers and functionaries, themselves constantly off-balance by the constant scorn on the part of the Americans. The American presence makes life unbearable to all groups and individuals hitherto submissive, even favourable to the U.S., have joined in the anti-U.S. struggle.

The flimsy base of the puppet regime is collapsing: its component elements are crossing over to the side of the revolution. The formation of the Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace, the People's Revolutionary Committee in This Thien—Hue, herald new, decisive stage in an irreversible process. All hope of patching up a more or less consistent puppet regime has definitely vanished. It can be nothing but a headless and limbless body.

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The flimsy base of the puppet regime is collapsing: its component elements are crossing over to the side of the revolution. The formation of the Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace, the People's Revolutionary Committee in This Thien—Hue, herald new, decisive stage in an irreversible process. All hope of patching up a more or less consistent puppet regime has definitely vanished. It can be nothing but a headless and limbless body.

2. We know the war cannot be won militarily, and there is a feeling that the country Defense Secretary Robert McNamara has not given the American people the facts of the situation.

3. Recent events such as Viet Cong attacks on South Viet Nam principal cities—even the capital of Saigon—show that the South Vietnamese government is utterly inept, has no control over the country, despite our tremendous expenditures of money and lives, and dreadful losses among the Vietnamese people.

Ernest Gruening (AP, Feb. 24, 1968)

The End of a Myth

(Continued from page 2)

the Americans. What can one say about a Nguyen Can Ky who has publicly proclaimed his admiration for the Viet Cong?

At every turn, the Vietnamese people's struggle has smashed the machinery painstakingly pieced together by Washington, and for years, there has been innumerable succession of coups d'état and purges, a round of "governments," the trying of the most diverse formulae, ending up with the Thieu-Ky clique, a gang torn by implacable rivalries and hated by even the moderate elements of the people.

Washington had thought that the massive presence of a U.S. expeditionary corps would help consolidate the puppet regime. The contrary has happened. The extreme savagery of the Americans' conduct of the war, the destruction of innumerable villages over the years, the use of napalm, phosphorus, toxic chemicals, poison gases, have fanned up the hatred of the Americans in all sections of the population, including puppet soldiers and officials.

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WHAT IS GENERAL WHEELER...

(Continued from page 8)

Should one, elaborate a new line of attack? What steps should be taken beyond the "limited warfare" as outlined in General Maxwell Taylor's famous "four points"? At the present, international opinion is divided. To Viet Nam, a reckless adventure, and a suicidal step for Johnson in an election year.

So the only alternative that remains to a man who is not who is so completely convinced of American military superiority and so of the need to keep "U.S. commitments" to the South Vietnamese, is to continue

maintained on the Communists until this war is won. Where would such a military programme lead? Already, voices are being raised in Washington political circles against it. Senator Robert Kennedy has stressed that it would be irrational to send more troops to Viet Nam in view of the fact that the war is being very badly conducted from a military point of view. Besides, new military efforts would entail more expenditures, which would weigh heavily on an ever-burdened economy.

There is a growing opinion that mean that American citizens would have a heavier load to carry. Where the taxmen and prices, not to mention loss of life for those sent to Viet Nam for

mean more popularity for Johnson in an election year.

Such measures would be understandable if they could improve U.S. lot in Viet Nam. But any intelligent observer can easily see, in the present, that the chances of South Viet Nam, that defeat is inevitable for the Americans.

What good could 100,000 more G.I.s do, when half a million of their like had proved powerless? American troops have been stretched to the limit, and there is no completely submerged in the immense ocean of the people's war.

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☆ Photos: — Young woman technicians in a Hanoi factory.

— 40 per cent of North Viet Nam medicare personnel are women.

P.L.A.F. SCORE NEW VICTORIES:

HUE: Over 1,000 Enemy Troops Put out of Action.

HIGHWAY No 9: Ta Con Completely Encircled; Dong Ha, Con Tien under P.L.A.F. Artillery Fire.

NAM BO AND WESTERN HIGH PLATEAUX: Tan Son Nhat, Bien Hoa, Ben Tre Airfields Pounded; U.S. Barracks at Cu Chi, Pleiku, Dakto, Kontum Violently Attacked.

BETWEEN Feb. 18 and 19, the P.L.A.F. continued to attack the enemy violently on all battlefields.

In **Hue** city they forced the enemy to show up in his desperate attempts to retake the city and inflicted heavy losses on him.

From Feb. 22 to 24, they foiled a dozen counter-attacks mounted by a dozen battalions of U.S. and puppet troops, harassed their rescue parties, killed or wounded nearly 1,000 enemy soldiers, put out of action one company, burned 15 military vehicles, including 13 M.113 armored carriers, sank 6 war vessels, downed 2 aircraft, and wiped out 2 resistance-nests set up in two dwelling houses.

On Feb. 27, the P.L.A.F. scored a direct hit at a U.S. landing craft on the Perfume River, 2 km north of Hue. The craft was blown up and many G.I.'s on board were killed.

As the situation grew tense in Hue, the battle raged on the front north of **Highway No 9**. On Feb. 24 alone, the P.L.A.F. shot down 4 choppers, sank 4 vessels at Cu Viet and sent to the bottom 2 other boats at Dong Ha port. The following day, the P.L.A.F. tightened their encirclement around **Ta Con**, a few kilometers north of Khe Sanh. Seven G.I.'s who were repairing their materials and carrying away water brought in by choppers were killed by P.L.A.F. sniping fire. The rest ran back to their fortifications. When the enemy was compelled to send out troops to relieve the P.L.A.F. encirclement he had nearly one company wiped out, 117 U.S. Marines were killed on the battlefield. The defenders of Ta Con, under sniping fire and artillery shells, had to

dig in deep in their fortifications. In one day Ta Con was shelled four times. Its gun emplacements, radar site, ammunition dumps and aircraft parking ground were hit by the P.L.A.F. artillery.

On Feb. 25, the puppet depot, a heavy gun and a military vehicle were destroyed. That is why on Feb. 26, the U.S. Command was forced to send out another clearing mission. Though progressing cautiously, the rescuing group suffered heavy losses. Its advance party was nearly completely wiped out, having 78 men killed on the spot. The P.L.A.F. captured a great quantity of firearms including 15 machine-guns and tommy-guns and two 60mm mortars.

In a co-ordinated action with Ta Con, on Feb. 26, the P.L.A.F. heavily shelled the petrol dump, explosive depots and aircraft parking field at **Dong Ha**; the petrol dump was set afire and the ammunition depot blown up. Many C-130 four-engine freighters and choppers were destroyed. Con Tien base and Heights 241 and 845 were heavily pounded and suffered great damage.

Fighting in the **Nam Bo** (South Viet Nam proper) battlefield was also fierce. On Feb. 27, the P.L.A.F. attacked simultaneously **Tan Son Nhat**, **Bien Hoa** airbases and **The Duc** cadet school (12 km from Saigon). The enemy admitted 39 G.I.'s killed or wounded and many aircraft destroyed or damaged. On Feb. 28, the P.L.A.F. intercepted a column of puppet paratroopers 6 km north of Tan Son Nhat airbase, causing many casualties among them; they also shelled the base of U.S. Infantry Division 25 at Cu Chi, 32 km northwest of Saigon.

In **The Daet** Mo province, north of Saigon, on the night of Feb. 17, the P.L.A.F. attacked and occupied Dau Tieng townlet, hammered at

the enemy in Hon Quan town, overran 6 posts along strategic Highway No 13, shelled Lai Khe and the base of Regiment 8, puppet Division 3, and intercepted an enemy rescue party. In the battle given to an enemy column of reinforcement 3 km north of The Dau Mot town, the P.L.A.F. entirely wiped out Battalion 1, Regiment 8, Division 5. On Feb. 20, they destroyed 11 tanks, overran a post and wiped out Company 16, Battalion 4, puppet Regiment 7, and captured 20 men in Cu Chi district.

60 km southwest of Saigon, the P.L.A.F. continued to attack the enemy within and around **My Tho** town. On Feb. 18 and 19, they foiled all the enemy's counter-attacks, causing nearly 500 enemy casualties and burning 8 M.113 armored carriers. On Feb. 25, they wiped out a U.S. motorized infantry battalion, destroyed 40 M.113 armored cars, sapper's lorries and self-propelled guns of the enemy units clearing Highway No 4.

Meanwhile, the P.L.A.F. continued to storm the remaining enemy bases in **Ben Tre** town. On the night of Feb. 23 alone, they caused heavy damage to the military sector C.P. and the airfield, razed many posts to the ground and destroyed many bridges.

In the **Western High Plateaux**, on the night of Feb. 18, the P.L.A.F. seized control of Da Lat, killing or wounding 357 enemy soldiers. On the night of Feb. 19, they hammered at Holloway camp, 3 km east of Pleiku town, in inflicting serious losses on the enemy. The following day, they assaulted many positions of U.S. Infantry Division 4, including those of Brigades 1 and 2 of the same division, 20 km west of Dakto and 8 km northeast of Kontum town.

RECENT events in South Viet Nam having given him the jitters, President Johnson dispatched General Wheeler to Saigon on a 3-day on-the-spot investigation. As soon as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff returned to Washington, a war council was held and long sessions devoted to the search for a solution to a situation which was obviously a desperate one for the Yankee neo-colonialist undertaking.

Let us skip Wheeler's public declarations, which are but an expression of the pessimism in the Johnsonian tradition. Didn't he for instance, in his proclamation, say that the situation was so serious, that the South

—The war brought into the midst of Saigon itself which is subjected to daily attacks and bombardments by the People's Liberation Armed Forces; the American forces reduced to the defensive, as admitted by Westmoreland himself; the American Command in disarray, not knowing what to do, completely in the dark as to the designs of its adversary; —The U.S. "two-pronged strategy" doomed to failure; the famous "pacification" program gone bankrupt; the few villages having remained under U.S.-puppet control fallen in the people's hands beyond recovery; all forces having been withdrawn to

What Is General Wheeler Going to Propose to the White House?

Vietnamese people's *Tet* offensive had resulted in a heavy defeat for the patriots, that the puppet army had proved its worth in those dramatic days, that the American army had by no means been caught by surprise, etc., etc.? Almost every report in the Western press is a flat denial of such assertions. As to the tribute paid by Wheeler, who assured him of President Johnson's "full confidence," can it be anything more than a stiffener for the sagging morale of the 500,000-strong American expeditionary corps?

Leaving the propaganda side out of count, the Wheeler mission must have sounded the alarm to the master of the White House. A somber picture indeed it had found in Saigon:

—A 1,200,000-strong army composed of American, satellite and puppet troops completely powerless, and suffering heavy losses, before the tidal wave of the people's assaults, which submerge the whole of South Viet Nam, including the urban lairs of the Americans and their puppets;

defend the cities;

—The puppet administration and army, the two pillars of General Wheeler's pillars, neo-colonialism, in full disintegration; the third of the Saigon troops disbanded, the rest threatened with disarray, their morale sinking and their combativeness vanishing fast; the Thieu Ky clique more and more isolated and torn up by internal rivalries (exacerbated by defeat), as evidenced by arrests in Saigon and purges of senior officers of the puppet army;

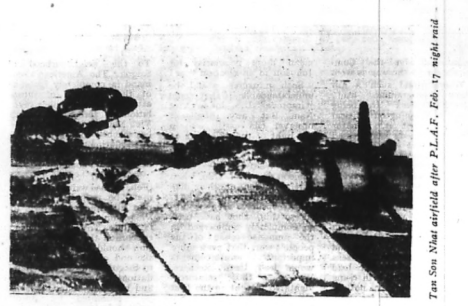
—Beyond the frontiers of South Viet Nam, the ever-more difficult position of the Americans and their "local allies" in Laos, under the blows of the Lao patriots, while North Viet Nam, the Great Rear of the Southern revolutionary forces, stands firmer than ever.

Such was the situation before General Wheeler's eyes. Now, what could he recommend to the White House?

As stressed by an AFP correspondent in a despatch from Saigon, dated Feb. 23, "it is from such bitter facts that one must work out

(Continued page 7)

REPEATED ATTACKS ON TAN SON NHAT AIRBASE



Tan Son Nhat airfield after P.L.A.F. Feb. 17 night raid

TAN SON NHAT is the fifth busiest airport in the world. The H.Q. of General Westmoreland is located there. The enemy brag that this airbase is protected by 21 rows of barbed wire and various kinds of mines, patrolled every 15 minutes in the night by a U.S. convoy and possesses a system of powerful searchlights which can light up a region within dozen kilometres, thus making it impossible for any Liberation fighters to sneak in. Yet between Jan. 31 and Feb. 27, 1968, this airbase was the target of more than ten powerful attacks of the revolutionary armed forces of Saigon-Gia Dinh.

On Jan. 31, at 2.30 a.m., after a heavy artillery shelling, the Liberation fighters broke into the airfield in many columns and assaulted

many times the U.S. Staff. The clatter of rifles, machine-guns and explosions of hand grenades resounded from all corners. Taken unaware, the U.S. and the puppet commands were in a turmoil, their rank- and file, fed by the Thieu Ky command, panicked. The commander of U.S. Air Wing No 7 had to call in armed helicopters from other places to bomb the barracks in the airfield though a great number of wounded puppet soldiers had not been evacuated. As most of the searchlights were destroyed, the enemy had to send up flares without let-up to get control of the area.

The following days, the revolutionary forces occupied the barracks and vestments, parts of the airbase and other places. On the night of Feb. 3, they struck directly

(Continued page 6)